

Your Security

Make Space For Parking Lot Security

Parking areas are danger zones. You are vulnerable to assault as you travel from a crowded workplace or shopping area to the relative safety of your vehicle. This is particularly true at night and off-shift hours when there are few people around.

Follow these tips for safety in parking lots and garages and when parking your vehicle curbside.

- Park only in well-lit areas. Do not park next to vans or thick shrubbery.
 - Park near building entrances, rather than in isolated areas of the parking lot or parking garage.
 - Choose a parking space visible from the building lobby or from the street.
 - Use parking escort services. Travel to and from your vehicle with co-workers.
 - Some employers with large parking lots supply the workers with alarm transmitters. If they run into a problem, they can activate the alarm setting off sirens and flashing lights, as well as alerting security staff.
 - Find your vehicle door key before you leave the building for the parking area, so you do not have to search for them in your pocket or handbag when you reach your vehicle.
 - Carry your key in your hand in the position you would use to open
- your door. The key can be used as a weapon if you are threatened. To discourage thieves, carry your wallet in an inside pocket. Hold your purse or briefcase securely, but be prepared to use it as a weapon or let it go rather than risk injury by defending it.
- Wear shoes and clothing comfortable enough so you can run if necessary.
 - Look around before you head for your car, watching for loiterers.
 - Observe other vehicles, particularly vehicles with someone in them. Don't walk near vehicles with darkly-tinted windows which could conceal occupants. Do not walk near vans with sliding doors; these can be easily opened to grab a kidnapping victim.
 - As you approach your automobile, look under it and beside it to make sure there isn't someone hiding. Before entering the vehicle, check in the back seat for a possible intruder.
 - If you have a two-door car, get into the habit of flipping the seats forward when you leave the car. If you return and find they have been moved back, you will know someone has been in your car and might still be there. Leave the area and call the police or the parking lot security.
 - Be suspicious if you return to your vehicle and find a flat tire. This could be an attempt to put you
- off your guard so you can be attacked.
- Lock the doors as soon as you enter the vehicle. Keep it locked at all times when you are driving, as well as when you leave it parked.
 - In parking garages, avoid isolated areas such as stairwells. You might consider walking down the auto ramp instead, if you can do so without risk of being struck by a vehicle.
 - If you are staying later than you expected, such as working overtime, move your vehicle to a less isolated spot before it gets dark.
 - Don't leave anything of interest in your car which might attract attention and encourage a break-in or robbery attempt. Lock valuables in the trunk.
 - Don't leave identifying documents such as insurance papers in the vehicle. Criminals, including stalkers, have been known to break into a woman's car, record the name and address from the registration and rob or attack her at home.
 - While a personal parking space is a great job perk, don't have your name on it. This information might make you a target.

Stay alert in parking areas. Watch out for anyone who might mean trouble for you.

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walking down the auto ramp instead, if you can do so without risk of being struck by a vehicle.

- If you are staying later than you expected, such as working overtime, move your vehicle to a less isolated spot before it gets dark.
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